

# THE 3RD SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

## WITH COMMUNION

January 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2022



# CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue  
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1  
Church: 905-685-8294 Fax 905-685-7661

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**Office Hours:** Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon

**Bulletin Announcements:** Please send to [secretary@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:secretary@christlutheransc.ca).

Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

<b>Pastor:</b>	Pastor Todd Hoeffs	(289-362-0113)	<a href="mailto:pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com">pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com</a>
<b>Parish Assistant:</b>	Louise Gondosch	(905-329-8579)	<a href="mailto:parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca">parish.assistant@christlutheransc.ca</a>
<b>Business Manager:</b>	Karen McCumber		<a href="mailto:business.manager@christlutheransc.ca">business.manager@christlutheransc.ca</a>
<b>Secretary:</b>	Pat Kimpel		<a href="mailto:secretary@christlutheransc.ca">secretary@christlutheransc.ca</a>
<b>Facebook:</b>	Lisa Gall		<a href="http://www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC">www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC</a>
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**Prayer:** O Lord God Almighty, because You have always supplied Your servants with the several gifts which come from Your Holy Spirit alone, leave also us not destitute of Your manifold gifts nor of grace to use them always to Your honor and glory and the good of others; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

**Children’s Message:** Psalms 19: <https://youtu.be/K7HUpA3Be3o>

**Organist:** Mayumi Munoz

**Readers:** 9 a.m. — Don Fretz; 11 a.m. – Howard Bogusat

**DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:**

Monday: Luke 4: 22-30

Wed.: John 4: 4-14

Friday: Rom. 15: 14-21

Tuesday: Eph. 3: 1-12

Thurs: John 4: 27-42

Saturday: Acts 15: 7-12

**WORSHIP NOTE:**

- A recording of Sunday’s service will be uploaded to YouTube – “Gathering the Scattered” at: (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3a4p6prdJGEyP5S-q-cNSq>).
- A PDF version of the order of service for each Sunday will also be posted on our church website: [christlutheransc.ca](http://christlutheransc.ca).
- Archived videos of Sunday’s service will be uploaded to christlutheransc.ca – “Worship” page.

Any questions or concerns, please check out our church website (<http://christlutheransc.ca/>), contact Judy Slingerland ([chairman.worship@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:chairman.worship@christlutheransc.ca)) or Pastor Todd ([pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com](mailto:pastortoddhoeffs@gmail.com)). or phone the church office. May the peace of the risen Lord be with you all.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** this morning at 10 a.m.

**BIBLE STUDY:** For all ages 10 AM - 10:45 AM

will be looking at our faith and how we witness, share, care and live as God's beloved in our communities in our challenging times which also bring many opportunities. Please join us in the church basement. Materials are provided. COVID protocols will be observed.

**WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY** will meet next on Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. At this point we will plan to be on Zoom. Please connect with Louise if you would like to be added to the list.

**YOUTH BREAK this Friday:** *"Come to me all you who are weary and burdened and I will give you rest"*. We all need times of rest and refreshment. Youth & Confirmand’s are invited to join us for *"Freezing with Friends."* Put on your parka, hot paws, toque and thermals for a night of Chilly Charades, Chips, Hot Cocoa and hopefully even Roasting your own S'mores. Be sure to dress warmly! **Friday, January 28th at 6:30 pm at the Gondosch's. RSVP Louise 905-329-8579**

**INTRODUCING RIGHT-NOW MEDIA’S** first live-action kids’ show, *The Creators!* This light-hearted series tells the story of a group of friends on a mission to create movies with meaning. This original, six-episode kids’ show encourages viewers to work together, dream big, and honour God. **A new episode releases every Tuesday so add this series to your My Saved list and check back each week!**

## **LUTHERAN CHURCH - CANADA NATIONAL YOUTH GATHERING:**

Lutheran Young people from across Canada will be gathering together this **July 15-19, 2022 in Winnipeg, Manitoba**. The theme for the gathering is "**IN NOT OF**" from Philippians 3:20 "But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Saviour, The Lord Jesus Christ." Information packages are available from Louise. Save the date, check out the website at <http://www.lccnyg.ca>, start following the Facebook and Instagram pages and check out this fun announcement from Pastor Glenn Worcester <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=68gXVYofMY>

**BAZAAR FUNDS:** The LWML ladies were very pleased to **disburse the Bazaar Funds** at our January Zoom meeting this past week. From the money that was raised through the Silent Auction, \$405.79 had already been spent in Nov. buying extra items that we needed for the "Warm Feet" kits and now an additional \$485.21 will be donated through Start-Me-Up-Niagara, \$500.21 will also be given to the Haiti Feeding Program

From the rest of the Bazaar Funds we are donating the following:

Concordia Seminary	\$ 500
CLWR	\$1000
Lutheran Bible Translators	\$ 450
Ontario Medical Missions	\$1050
SOUL	\$ 400
Nicaragua	\$ 500
Haiti Feeding Program	\$ 250 <i>(in addition to the amount above for a total of \$750.21)</i>
LAMP	\$ 150
Refugee Fund	\$ 500

***THANK YOU AGAIN TO ALL WHO HELPED WITH OUR BAZAAR IN ANY WAY, SO THAT WE WERE ABLE TO RAISE MONEY TO DONATE TO ALL THESE MISSIONS. We are blessed to be able to serve our Lord in this way.***

***May Jesus' light shine on you and renew your Spirit in 2022!***

**LWMLC/MARY MARTHA SOCIETY** is pleased to invite all the women of the congregation to any or all of the following evenings. We look forward to the time when health and safety protocols will not be necessary, however, until that time, any public health Covid protocols will be in place for all of our meetings. The following is our program (subject to changes) until June:

Feb. 15 <sup>th</sup> :	7 pm: Bible Study with Pastor Hoeffs
March 15 <sup>th</sup> :	7 pm: Speaker
April 19 <sup>th</sup> :	7 pm: Quilt Tying/Stamp Trimming
May 17 <sup>th</sup> :	7 pm: Bible Study
June 22 <sup>nd</sup> :	5:30 pm: End of season Social and Dinner

"But they who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles; they shall run and not be weary; they shall walk and not faint." Is. 40:31

**\*\*\*\*To confirm your interest to attend, please call Lorraine or Carole (or email)**

**LWML-Canada, Ontario District, Niagara Zone**, is hosting our District Convention in St. Catharines at Grace Lutheran Church (accommodation at Niagara College) on June 9 to 11th, 2022. More details will follow. If at all possible, please plan to attend. It is a wonderful time to get to know and renew friendships with our sisters in Christ from around the province! It is a time to focus on

**"Joy, Patience, Prayer"** which is the theme of the Convention. (Romans 12:12)

*Our Seminary Student Eduardo Farias and his wife Daniella will be our wonderful entertainment for Friday evening!*

**Last Sunday Attendance: Jan. 16th, 2021 Attn: 9 A.M. – 48 ; 11 A.M. – 26 Total: 74**

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or – (--)</u>
Current:			1,455.00	10,747.84	
LCC Missions			93.00	703.50	
Property Improvement:			12.00	146.50	

**2022 DONATION ENVELOPES** are available for pick up in your mailbox. If you don't have a mailbox, please check the table at the entrance to the sanctuary. If you have not been issued envelopes and would like some, or, you would like to be assigned a mailbox, please contact Karen at: [business.manager@christlutheransc.ca](mailto:business.manager@christlutheransc.ca) or the office at 905-685-8294.

**URGENTLY NEEDED: NEW or GENTLY USED** men and women's WINTER coats, boots (*must be clean and seasonal, not Spring/Fall*) and greatly needed is new underwear (*new only*) for the homeless in our area. Items will be distributed by Niagara Mobile Closet, free of charge. Jill Munoz and Judy Mason will collect them from our church and bring to the Mobile closet.

**VALENTINE'S DAY** is coming and you can buy a **"Valentine's Heart"** to paste on the church wall for \$2.00, (*much like buying a Dove at Shoppers Drug Mart*). There will be hearts for everyone: friends, lovers, parents and even our dear Pastor Todd. Samples will be available and Judy Mason will be selling them very soon. so please buy your heart or several hearts to support **"Out of the Cold" & "Silver Spire Church Soap Programme"** for the homeless.



**FLOWERS** have been placed on the altar this morning to the glory of God by Andy & Bette Vasko and family in loving memory of Susan Vasko.

**HANDYMAN WANTED:** The Seminary is looking for a handyman to help out with odd jobs around the building—dealing with basic repair and maintenance issues. Time requirements are minimal—perhaps one or two days a month at most. If you have some free time and would like to volunteer, please contact the business manager, Ashu Paul, at [business@concordia-seminary.ca](mailto:business@concordia-seminary.ca) or call 905-688-2362 ext. 24.

**SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC:** It's important for members to keep in mind that expenses for payroll, utilities, maintenance, etc. continue to accumulate even when you are not comfortable attending service.

**1. THROUGH EFT DONATIONS:** Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation continues to facilitate this service for us. To assist you in continuing your financial support to your church, we encourage you to fill out the form that is available for printing at: [http://christlutheransc.ca/?page\\_id=96](http://christlutheransc.ca/?page_id=96) and then mail the form along with a voided cheque to:

Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation,  
275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3, Attn: Darryl Holland

**2. BY MAIL:** cheques can still be mailed to:

Christ Lutheran Church  
140 Russell Ave. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1W1  
or dropped in the Church mailbox at the East entrance.

**3. ONLINE VIA LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA:** Lutheran Church-Canada has opened a web portal that allows parishioners to donate directly to their home church:

<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pageId=donation-edit&categoryId=10972>

select "St. Catharines-Christ Lutheran-30950" from the drop down menu, enter the amount of your donations and LCC will transfer your donation to Christ. Donation is via VISA or Mastercard. Tax receipts will be issued by LCC (not Christ). This opportunity will be in effect until the COVID-19 emergency is over.

**EXTRA HANDS & BODIES NEEDED:** With COVID-19 still a concern, and now the Omicron virus, we will continually need extra people assisting in our services. With offering both 9 am and 11 am services, we are finding ourselves short staffed of volunteers. Particularly for the late service, we need your help in the following areas:

- 1) Greeting of worshippers at entrance and Covid Protocol [highlighting names on attendance sheet and sanitizing]
- 2) Preparation of our PowerPoint worship services [editing the Google Doc Slides, can be done at home]
- 3) Operation of the PowerPoint during church services [training with written instruction will be provided]
- 4) Taking a turn preparing the Altar for Communion and seasonal colour cloth changes [Altar Guild]
- 5) Ushering people to pew seats and directing people to line up for communion
- 6) Lighting and extinguishing of altar candles
- 7) Recording services using newly installed equipment [training with written instructions will be provided]

We pray that you consider helping. We need participation from all ages. Should you wish more information about what is involved, please speak to Judy Slingerland, Tom Kuhl or Pastor Todd.

# CREATIVE CONTEMPORARY COMMUNION

THE 3<sup>RD</sup> SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

January 23, 2022 - 9 AM Contemporary Worship

OPENING HYMN: "Thy Word Is A Lamp"

**Chorus: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**

**Verse 1: When I feel afraid, think I've lost my way  
Still You're there right beside me  
Nothing will I fear as long as You are near  
Please be near me to the end;**

**Chorus: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**

**Verse 2: I will not forget --Your love for me and yet  
My heart forever is wandering  
Jesus be my guide and hold me to Your side  
I will love You to the end;**

**Chorus: Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path  
Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path**

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CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

You are my hiding place O Lord;  
**you will save me from trouble.**

I sing aloud of your salvation,  
**because you protect me.**

Then I confessed my sins to you;  
**I did not conceal my wrong-doings.**

Let us confess our sins together, as children of our Heavenly Father:

O Gracious God,

**Our sins are too heavy to carry, too real to hide, and too deep to undo. Forgive what our lips tremble to name, what our hearts can no longer bear, and what has become for us a consuming fire of judgment. Set us free from a past that we cannot change; open to us a future in which we can be changed; and gift us with grace to grow more into the likeness and image of Your dear Son, our Saviour, Jesus Christ, the light of the world. Amen.**

Receive the forgiveness Christ Jesus Himself has won for you by His Passion, death and resurrection. In the place of Christ and by His holy command, I forgive you all of your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

LORD, HAVE MERCY

**Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord have mercy.**

1. **Glory to God, Glory to God, Glory to God, in the High--est.**
2. **God cares for me, God cares for me, God cares for me, He's so good to me!**
3. **He sent us Christ, He sent us Christ, He sent us Christ, on a cross for me.**
4. **I praise His name, I praise His name, I praise His name, For He rose for me.**

*Velna Ledin, 1933 Public domain*

#### GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you: **And also with you.**

Almighty God, Heavenly Father, Source of every blessing, Your generous goodness comes to us anew every day. By the work of Your Holy Spirit lead us to acknowledge Your great gifts, give thanks for Your benefits and serve You willingly; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

#### THE WORD

**Old Testament:** *Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10*

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**The Epistle:** *1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a*

[St. Paul writes]: For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is

honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SUNG GOSPEL VERSE:

**Make us one Lord--Make us one  
Holy Spirit make us one  
Let Your love flow  
So the world will know  
We are one—in—You.**

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**The Holy Gospel:** *St. Luke 4: 14-21*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter:

**Glory to You, O Lord.**

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to You, O Christ.**

THE NICENE CREED:

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered, and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**



GOSPEL SONG:

*“Let Us Adore”*

*Hillsong 2005*

**Verse 1:** The heavens declare the glory of God  
and all of the world will join the praise  
His wonders proclaim

**Verse 2:** The oceans and skies lift up their voice  
And all He has made will rise to bless  
The King of all kings

**Chorus:** Let us adore Him; Let us adore Him  
Jesus Christ is the Lord

**Chorus 2:** Come and behold Him  
Bow down before Him  
Jesus Christ is the Lord

**Verse 3:** Eternity's King is coming again  
Though all of the earth will fade away  
His truth will remain

**Bridge:** Hallelujah Hallelujah  
You are worthy of all praise

*CCLI #: 4437846 © Hillsong Music 2005 - Words & Music by Reuben Morgan*

#### MESSAGE

#### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the precious gift of your Son- the Word made flesh. Thank you for revealing yourself to us through Jesus, and for all that you've done to bring us forgiveness and new life. Forgive us our many sins and purify our lives. Help us to follow Christ in faith-filled repentance and devotion. We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

We pray for our nation, Canada. Thank you for the abundant blessings you shower on us here. Graciously uphold the military, the police, and all rescue workers, protecting us from fire and flood, from war and disease, from famine and strife, and from every kind of disaster. Draw all citizens into the radiance of your light, so that all may properly care for and use the resources of this wonderful country. We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

Thank you for the blessings of good government and civil peace. We commend to you our Queen, our Prime Minister and Premier. Help all in government and positions of responsibility maintain honesty and truth, justice and peace. And give our leaders wisdom and compassion in policy regarding refugees. Draw us into the radiance of your light, that we may be obedient to proper authority. We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

Support all people in their proper vocation, dear Lord, and help all those who are unemployed. Bless our arts and culture, our science and technology. Draw us all into the radiance of your light, that we may each give faithful service to you in our various callings. We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

We pray for the churches in Canada. Keep your people true to your word, regular in the use of the means of grace, and genuine in renewal. Where there is error correct it, and bring the churches to unity in you. Draw us into the radiance of your light, that we may give a clear witness to you in this land. We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

Have mercy, Lord, on those suffering in the shadows of darkness and caught in the traps of sin and death. Shine on them with your grace and peace. Give health and strength to all we know to be in need [especially....] that if it be Your will, restore fullness of health or uphold them with grace to endure; We speak to You, O Lord;

**hear our humble prayer.**

Lord God, Gracious Creator, may your word be heard wherever your people gather, so that they are set free to bring your good news to all the world. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE SACRAMENT

The Lord be with you:

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

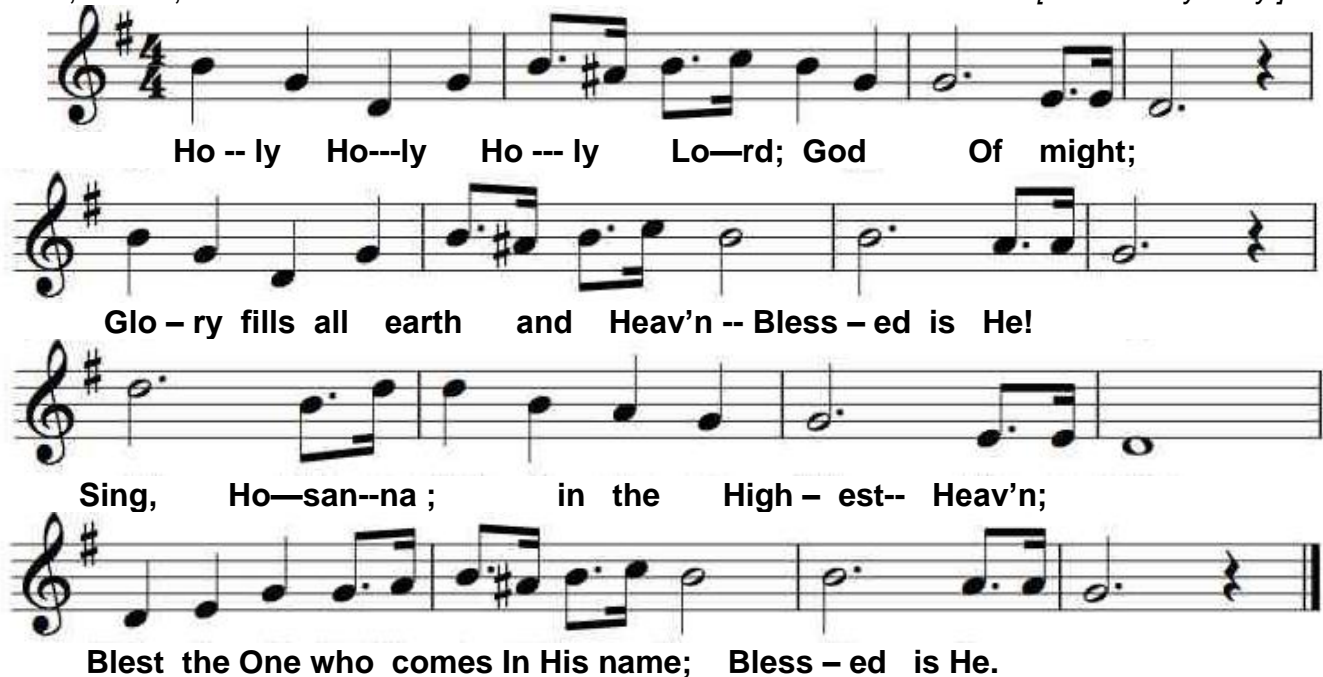
Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give Him thanks and praise.**

It is good and right and joyful, that we should all the time and in every place give You thanks to You, O Lord, Holy God: for You sent your only Son to appear among us as a man, and through him you have fully revealed the light of your presence to us. And so, with the church on earth and the whole company of Heaven, we praise Your name and join their never-ending song:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

[Tune: "I'll Fly Away"]



Ho -- ly Ho---ly Ho --- ly Lo—rd; God Of might;  
Glo - ry fills all earth and Heav'n -- Bless - ed is He!  
Sing, Ho—san--na ; in the High - est-- Heav'n;  
Blest the One who comes In His name; Bless - ed is He.

THE LORD'S PRAYER:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **And also with you.**

LAMB OF GOD

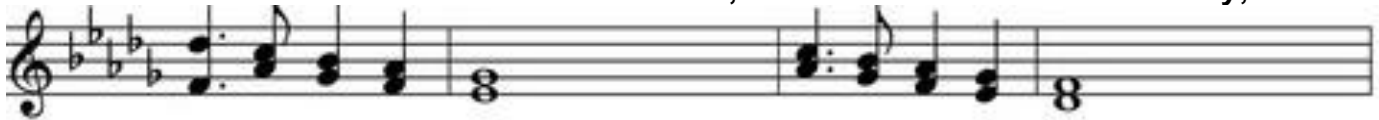
[Tune: I Surrender All]



O Lord Je-sus Christ the True Lamb; this world's sins You take a-way;



O Lord Je-sus Christ the True Lamb; this world's sins You take a-way;



Lord, have mercy now;

Christ, have mercy now.



Lord, have mer -cy; Christ, have mer -cy; Give us now Your peace.

COMMUNION HYMN:

"Lord Be Glorified"

- 1. In my life Lord  
Be glorified be glorified  
In my life Lord  
Be glorified today
- 2. In this Bread, Lord  
Be glorified be glorified  
In this Wine, Lord  
Be glorified today
- 3. In Your church Lord  
Be glorified be glorified

- In Your church Lord  
Be glorified today
- 4. In this Meal, Lord  
Be glorified be glorified  
In this Meal, Lord  
Be glorified today
- 5. In my home Lord  
Be glorified be glorified  
In my home Lord  
Be glorified today

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"O Jesus, Blessed Lord"

[Doxology tune] LSB 632

- 1. O Jesus, blessed Lord, to You  
My heartfelt thanks and praise are due;  
Who have so lovingly bestowed  
On my Your body and Your blood.

- 2. Break forth, my soul, for joy and say:  
What grace has come to me this day!  
My Savior dwells within my heart:  
How blest am I! How good You are!

O Jesu, søde Jesu, dig --Thomas Kingo, 1689 Tr. Arthur J. Mason, 1889  
Source: *The Lutheran Hymnal*, 1941, No. 309

SONG OF SIMEON:

*“Let Your Servant Depart”*

*[tune: Sweet By & By]*

**Let your servant depart now in peace,  
For Your Word from of old is fulfilled,  
Your salvation my eyes now have seen,  
Long-prepared as it always has been.**

**In Your light, you reveal, the world’s promise and Israel’s great joy!  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always may You be adored.**

POST COMMUNION PRAYER:

Gracious God, our heavenly Father, as Christ Your Son manifested as our Saviour in the streams of the Jordan and at the Wedding at Cana in Galilee, so he is manifested for us again in the bread and the wine of this blest Holy Communion feast, and for this we thank and praise You. Through us may we make Him known to all people. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen**

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord upon you with favour, + and give you peace. **Amen.**

CLOSING HYMN:

*“Jesus Bring New Wine Out Of Me”*

*Hillsong*

**Verse 1:**

**In the crushing in the pressing  
You are making new wine  
In the soil I now surrender  
You are breaking new ground  
(You are breaking new ground)**

**Pre-Chorus:**

**So I yield to You and to Your careful hand  
When I trust You I don't need to understand**

**Chorus:**

**(So) Make me Your vessel  
Make me an offering  
Make me whatever You want me to be  
(God) I came here with nothing  
But all You have given me  
Jesus bring new wine out of me**

**Tag:**

**Jesus bring new wine out of me  
Jesus bring new wine out of me**

**Bridge:**

**'Cause where there is new wine  
There is new power  
There is new freedom  
And the kingdom is here  
I lay down my old flames  
To carry Your new fire today**

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**SERVICE NOTE:**

Glory to God, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lamb of God and Song of Simeon adapted and arranged by Rev. Todd Hoefts based on common ecumenical liturgical texts 2021.

Music notations from [www.hymnary.org](http://www.hymnary.org) website.

LUTHERAN SERVICE BOOK DIVINE SERVICE SETTING THREE

January 23, 2022 + 11 AM Traditional

OPENING HYMN: *"The People That In Darkness Sat"* LSB 412 LOBT GOTT, IHR CHRISTEN

**The people that in darkness sat, a glorious light have seen;  
the Light has shined on them who long  
in shades of death have been;  
in shades of death have been.**

**To hail thee, Sun of Righteousness, the gathering nations come,  
their joy when the reapers bear  
their harvest treasures home;  
their harvest treasures home.**

**His name shall be the Prince of Peace, the everlasting Lord,  
the Wonderful, the Counselor,  
the God by all adored;  
the God by all adored.**

*Words: John Morison (1749-1798), Scottish Paraphrases, 1781 Public Domain. [http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/hymn-lyrics/the\\_people\\_that\\_in\\_darkness\\_sat.htm](http://www.traditionalmusic.co.uk/hymn-lyrics/the_people_that_in_darkness_sat.htm)*

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God our Father, beseeching Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

Our help is in the name of the Lord,

**who made heaven and earth.**

I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord,

**and You forgave the iniquity of my sin.**

O Almighty God, merciful Father,

**I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.**

Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**Amen.**

LORD, HAVE MERCY:

**C** Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -

The first system of music for 'LORD, HAVE MERCY' consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat (B-flat) and a common time signature. It contains a series of chords and some eighth notes. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature, also containing chords and eighth notes. The lyrics 'Lord, have mer - cy up - on us. Christ, have mer - cy up -' are written below the upper staff.

on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.

The second system of music continues the piece. It also consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics 'on us. Lord, have mer - cy up - on us.' are written below the upper staff.

GLORIA:

**P** Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward

The first system of music for 'GLORIA' consists of two staves. The upper staff is in treble clef with a key signature of one flat and a common time signature. It begins with a piano (**P**) dynamic marking. The lower staff is in bass clef with the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics 'Glory be to God on high: **C** and on earth peace, good - will toward' are written below the upper staff.

men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,

The second system of music continues the piece. It consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics 'men. We praise Thee, we bless Thee, we wor - ship Thee,' are written below the upper staff.

we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.

The third system of music concludes the piece. It consists of two staves in the same key signature and time signature. The lyrics 'we glorify Thee, we give thanks to Thee, for Thy great glory.' are written below the upper staff.

O Lord God, heav'n - ly King, God the Fa - ther Al - mighty.

O Lord, the only - begotten Son, Je - sus Christ;

O Lord God, Lamb of God, Son of the Father,

that takest away the sin of the world, have mercy up - on us.

Thou that takest away the sin of the world, re - ceive our prayer.

Thou that sittest at the right hand of God the Father, have mercy up -

on us. For Thou only art holy; Thou on - ly art the Lord.

Thou only, O Christ, with the Ho - ly Ghost,

art most high in the glory of God the Father. A - men.

## SPOKEN GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY

The Lord be with you:

**And with your spirit.**

Let us pray: Almighty God, Heavenly Father, Source of every blessing, Your generous goodness comes to us anew every day. By the work of Your Holy Spirit lead us to acknowledge Your great gifts, give thanks for Your benefits and serve You willingly; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the same Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

## THE WORD

**Old Testament:** *Nehemiah 8: 1-3, 5-6, 8-10*

All the people gathered together into the square before the Water Gate. They told the scribe Ezra to bring the book of the law of Moses, which the LORD had given to Israel. Accordingly, the priest Ezra brought the law before the assembly, both men and women and all who could hear with understanding. This was on the first day of the seventh month. He read from it facing the square before the Water Gate from early morning until midday, in the presence of the men and the women and those who could understand; and the ears of all the people were attentive to the book of the law. And Ezra opened the book in the sight of all the people, for he was standing above all the people; and when he opened it, all the people stood up. Then Ezra blessed the LORD, the great God, and all the people answered, 'Amen, Amen', lifting up their hands. Then they bowed their heads and worshipped the LORD with their faces to the ground. So they read from the book, from the law of God, with interpretation. They gave the



sense, so that the people understood the reading. And Nehemiah, who was the governor, and Ezra the priest and scribe, and the Levites who taught the people said to all the people, 'This day is holy to the LORD your God; do not mourn or weep.' For all the people wept when they heard the words of the law. Then he said to them, 'Go your way, eat the fat and drink sweet wine and send portions of them to those for whom nothing is prepared, for this day is holy to our LORD; and do not be grieved, for the joy of the LORD is your strength.'

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**The Epistle:** *1 Corinthians 12: 12-31a*

[St. Paul writes]: For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. For in the one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. Indeed, the body does not consist of one member but of many. If the foot were to say, 'Because I am not a hand, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. And if the ear were to say, 'Because I am not an eye, I do not belong to the body', that would not make it any less a part of the body. If the whole body were an eye, where would the hearing be? If the whole body were hearing, where would the sense of smell be? But as it is, God arranged the members in the body, each one of them, as he chose. If all were a single member, where would the body be? As it is, there are many members, yet one body. The eye cannot say to the hand, 'I have no need of you', nor again the head to the feet, 'I have no need of you.' On the contrary, the members of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, and those members of the body that we think less honourable we clothe with greater honour, and our less respectable members are treated with greater respect; whereas our more respectable members do not need this. But God has so arranged the body, giving the greater honour to the inferior member, that there may be no dissension within the body, but the members may have the same care for one another. If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it. Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it. And God has appointed in the church first apostles, second prophets, third teachers; then deeds of power, then gifts of healing, forms of assistance, forms of leadership, various kinds of tongues. Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers? Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak in tongues? Do all interpret? But strive for the greater gifts. And I will show you a still more excellent way. This is the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

ALLELUIA:



**The Holy Gospel:** *St. Luke 4: 14-21*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. Luke, the 4<sup>th</sup> chapter:

♪ **Glory be to Thee, O Lord.** ♪

Then Jesus, filled with the power of the Spirit, returned to Galilee, and a report about him spread through all the surrounding country. He began to teach in their synagogues and was praised by everyone. When Jesus came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' And he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant, and sat down. The eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on him. Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

♪ Praise be to Thee, O Christ. ♪

THE NICENE CREED:

**I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made; who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate. He suffered, and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures, and ascended into heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of Life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified, who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic Church, I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead and the life ☩ of the world to come. Amen.**

HYMN OF THE DAY: "Hail To The Lord's Anointed" [www.hymnary.org/ELW](http://www.hymnary.org/ELW)



1 Hail to the Lord's a - noint - ed, great Da - vid's great - er Son!  
 2 You come with res - cue speed - y to those who suf - fer wrong,  
 3 You shall come down like show - ers up - on the fruit - ful earth;  
 4 Kings shall fall down be - fore you, and gold and in - cense bring;



Hail, in the time ap - point - ed, your reign on earth be - gun!  
 to help the poor and need - y, and bid the weak be strong;  
 love, joy, and hope, like flow - ers, spring in your path to birth.  
 all na - tions shall a - dore you, your praise all peo - ple sing.



You come to break op - pres - sion, to set the cap - tive  
 to give them songs for sigh - ing, their dark - ness turn to  
 Be - fore you on the moun - tains shall peace, the her - ald,  
 To you shall prayer un - ceas - ing and dai - ly vows as -



free, to take a - way trans - gres - sion and  
 light, whose souls, con - demned and dy - ing, are  
 go; and righ - teous - ness in foun - tains from  
 cend; your king - dom still in - creas - ing, a

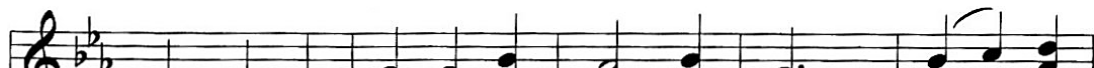


rule in eq - ui - ty.  
 pre - cious in your sight.  
 hill to val - ley flow.  
 king - dom with out end.

Text: James Montgomery, 1771-1854, alt.  
 Music: Leonhart Schröter, 1540-1602

FREUT EUCH, IHR LIEBEN  
 76760

MESSAGE



☐ Cre - ate in me a clean heart, O God, and re -



new a right spir - it with - in me. Cast me not a -



way from Thy pres-ence, and take not Thy Ho-ly Spir-it

from me. Re-store un-to me the joy of Thy sal-va-

tion, and up-hold me with Thy free spir-it. A-men.

#### PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:

Heavenly Father, thank you for the precious gift of your Son- the Word made flesh. Thank you for revealing yourself to us through Jesus, and for all that you've done to bring us forgiveness and new life. Forgive us our many sins and purify our lives. Help us to follow Christ in faith-filled repentance and devotion. We speak to You, O Lord: **hear our humble prayer.**

We pray for our nation, Canada. Thank you for the abundant blessings you shower on us here. Graciously uphold the military, the police, and all rescue workers, protecting us from fire and flood, from war and disease, from famine and strife, and from every kind of disaster. Draw all Canadians into the radiance of your light, so that we may properly care for and use the resources of this wonderful country. We speak to You, O Lord; **hear our humble prayer.**

Thank you for the blessings of good government and civil peace. We commend to you our Queen, our Prime Minister and Premier. Help all in government and positions of responsibility maintain honesty and truth, justice and peace. And give our leaders wisdom and compassion in policy regarding refugees. Draw us into the radiance of your light, that we may be obedient to proper authority. We speak to You, O Lord; **hear our humble prayer.**

Support all people in their proper vocation, dear Lord, and help all those who are unemployed. Bless our arts and culture, our science and technology. Draw us all into the radiance of your light, that we may each give faithful service to you in our various callings. We speak to You, O Lord; **hear our humble prayer.**

We pray for the churches in Canada. Keep your people true to your word, regular in the use of the means of grace, and genuine in renewal. Where there is error correct it, and bring the churches to unity in you. Draw us into the radiance of your light, that we may give a clear witness to you in this land. We speak to You, O Lord; **hear our humble prayer.**

Have mercy, Lord, on those suffering in the shadows of darkness and caught in the traps of sin and death. Shine on them with your grace and peace. Give health and strength to all we know to be in need [especially....] that if it be Your will, restore fullness of health or uphold them with grace to endure; We speak to You, O Lord; **hear our humble prayer.**

Lord God, Gracious Creator, may your word be heard wherever your people gather, so that they are set free to bring your good news to all the world. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

### THE SACRAMENT [Spoken responses]

The Lord be with you:

**And with your spirit.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up unto the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is meet and right so to do.**

It is truly good, right and salutary, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty Everlasting God: You sent your only Son to appear among us as a man, and through him you have fully revealed the light of your presence to us. And so, with the church on earth and the whole company of Heaven, we praise Your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS:

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord God of Sab - a - oth;  
heav'n and earth are full of Thy glo - ry. Ho - san - na,  
ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless-ed is He,

bless-ed is He, bless-ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.  
 Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

The image shows a musical score for two systems. Each system consists of a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment line (bass clef). The key signature has one flat (B-flat). The first system contains the lyrics 'bless-ed is He, bless-ed is He that com-eth in the name of the Lord.' The second system contains the lyrics 'Ho-san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.'

**THE LORD'S PRAYER:**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.**

**THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:**

Our Lord Jesus Christ, on the night when He was betrayed, took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to the disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My + body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of Me." In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My + blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always. **Amen.**

LAMB OF GOD:

O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, have mer-cy up-on us. O Christ, Thou Lamb of God, that tak-est a-way the sin of the world, grant us Thy peace. A - men.

COMMUNION HYMN:

“O God, Unseen”

[Tune: “O, For A Thousand Tongues”]

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1 O God, unseen yet ever near,<br/>We feel your presence now;<br/>and, thus inspired with holy fear,<br/>before your altar bow.</p> <p>2 Here may your faithful people know<br/>the blessings of your love,<br/>the streams that through the desert<br/>flow,<br/>the manna from above.</p> <p>3 We come, in faith and trust your<br/>Word,</p> | <p>4 So may we trust word today,<br/>for we belong to you;<br/>and go rejoicing on our way,<br/>with ev'ry strength renewed.</p> <p>5. And while our fellowship below<br/>In Christ remains so sweet;<br/>What blest communion shall we know<br/>When 'round His throne we meet.</p> |
|--|--|

Words: Edward Osler & Charles Wesley, alt. <https://www.lca.org.au/worship/wpp/modernised-hymns/>

NUNC DIMITTIS



Lord, now lettest Thou Thy servant de - part in peace ac -  
cord-ing to Thy word, for mine eyes have seen Thy salvation,  
which Thou hast pre - pared be - fore the face of all people,  
a light to light - en the Gen - tiles and the glo - ry of Thy  
peo - ple Is - ra - el. Glo - ry be to the Father and  
to the Son and to the Ho - ly Ghost; as it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ev - er shall be, world with - out end. A - men.

O give thanks to the Lord for He is good.  
And His mercy endures forever.



**POST COMMUNION PRAYER:** Let us pray: O God the Father, the fountain and source of all goodness, who in loving-kindness sent Your only-begotten Son into the flesh, we thank You that for His sake You have given us pardon and peace in this Sacrament, and we ask You not to forsake Your children but always to rule our hearts and minds by Your Holy Spirit that we may be enabled constantly to serve You; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The Lord be with you; **And with your spirit.**  
 Bless we the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

**SUNG BENEDICTION:**  The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious unto you. The Lord lift His countenance upon you, + and grant you peace. 

 **Amen, Amen, A—men.** 

CLOSING HYMN: **“Here I Am, Lord”**

**VERSES: *Majestically***



1. I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo-ple cry.  
 2. I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo-ple's pain.  
 3. I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



1. All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save. I who  
 2. I have wept for love of them. They turn a - way. I will  
 3. I will set a feast for them. My hand will save. Fin-est



1. made the stars of night, I will make their dark - ness bright.  
 2. break their hearts of stone, give them hearts for love a - lone.  
 3. bread I will pro- vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



1. Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send? \_\_\_\_\_  
 2. I will speak my word to them. Whom shall I send? \_\_\_\_\_  
 3. I will give my life to them. Whom shall I send? \_\_\_\_\_

**REFRAIN: *a tempo***



Here I am, Lord. \_\_\_\_\_ Is it I, Lord? \_\_\_\_\_ I have heard you



call- ing in the night. \_\_\_\_\_ *rit.* I will go, Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo* if you



lead me. \_\_\_\_\_ *rit.* I will hold your peo- ple in my heart. \_\_\_\_\_ *a tempo* **Fine**

**REV. TODD HOEFFS**

**Epiphany 3**

**Scripture: St. Luke 4:14-20**

**January 23, 2022**

Words matter. No matter what people say!

Nearly 2 years ago, I remember when the pandemic started. I was still in Winnipeg. We had a crazy rush on groceries [and toilet paper]. I still remember one of the hand written store signs posted on the shelves –1<sup>st</sup> time I ever saw such a thing: “Please take only one per customer, think of our more vulnerable people”. Not sure if people respected those words...shelves were empty for a long time. There was a time when words meant everything. Then a time where actions speak louder than words. Now, words matter a bit more again because we’ve been so restricted and isolated, we aren’t seeing people take action much right now. Truth be told, words AND actions matter. Like Jesus.

*His* words matter. They matter in the synagogue where he once worshipped as a boy and now returns as a young man. The newly baptized Jesus of Nazareth, in his hometown. At first everyone speaks well of him.

But He doesn’t hold their approval very long. People often fail to turn amazement into gratitude. Jesus IS the Word He speaks. That’s frightening. Change is something people say they want but really don’t. Jesus is up against a difficult time in Galilee. Poverty is pandemic. Roman military occupation leaves many angry and hopeless. Religious fanaticism turns zealously violent, and end times visions are the conspiracy theories of the day. So Jesus invites people to celebrate the Lord’s Liberation The Old Testament Jubilee!

Outlined in Leviticus 25: every 50 years ( $7 \times 7 + 1 = 50$ ) the land rests (no tilling or planting), foreclosed property is returned to the original family that owned it, all slaves get set free, and all debts forgiven. Sadly, Israel rarely if ever practiced the Jubilee Year. Setting people free from cultural and financial shackles took aware the control Israel needed to hold under Roman rule. For Jesus, divine liberation will create social healing, which jumpstarts the draw for all people into His Heavenly Kingdom. Just like the prayer He gives us: “Forgive us our debts as we forgive those in debt to us” (Matt 6:12). By stepping up to read, Jesus starts in motion the power of His Words. Words WITH action. Taking the scroll handed to Him.

**Reading portions from Isaiah 61 & 58;**

***“The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor...freedom for prisoners...sight for the blind...release for the oppressed...and proclaim the [Jubilee] year of God’s favor” (Luke 4:18-19).***

**These sound like wonderful words.**

Yes, bless the poor and bring sight to the blind! Great work indeed.

But then Jesus says:

*“Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing!”*

Even better news! Change is on the way today, not just somewhere on the horizon.

Which means everyone who hears these words of truth Will have to act. After all, we dare not be confronted with the truth and go on living as though the truth doesn’t make a difference.

The religious people in the synagogue on the day Jesus read from Isaiah also liked scripture; at least, they liked the idea of scripture. They liked being seen reading or listening to scripture. It made them feel better and made them look righteous. Rules and order are easy to trust. Laws are enforceable. Good news is not. It spreads uncontrollably. Freedom and release and forgiveness seem to good to be true --- And cost us all something we might hold dear. Can we practice the Lord’s Liberating

Word in our time of a pandemic? We've worshiped and tasted and benefited from God's grace; will the kingdom of God be within us too?

For all of us now, in this life, things are continually falling apart. The core of what nations are building with human pride and ambition never holds. It was true in Isaiah's day, it was true in Jesus' time, and it is true in ours. Things in life are always falling apart, from crumbling walls to erosion of values, Another day closer to the final end. Are you and I going to live on the basis of everything being horrible and the only future you have is bleak? Are you and I going to make the assumption that the world is going down the drain and there's nothing you can do anyways? Then you and I will be dominated by fear, despair, and anger. Or are you and I going to live in Isaiah's Word and Jesus' Word of promise that He sets in motion by actively dying and rising anew!? In other words, will we keep on living by faith. Then courage, endurance, resolution, hope, and compassion will open up to us.

Maybe Jesus' Words DO matter because He has lived them. They're a done deal.

Release means the world to a people chained to sin, Satan and eternal pain.

Countless marginalized folks struggled under debt payment, physical illness or oppressed by demons, and all got excluded from the religious community. Freedom here involves a total break of the chains which lock people down To all the things that harm us.

Our own selves. Stress. Demands. Frustrations. Pains, illnesses, cares.

Starts with the gift of forgiveness – release from our own sins and the sins others afflict onto us.

All of us here harbor some form of hatred against another person or group of people.

Know and trust that God has forgiven you all your wrongs. That strength makes it possible (not easy, but possible) to forgive even those people who have not sought your forgiveness, even those people who insist they're right and you're wrong. By forgiving others we heal the wounds in our soul and continue the chain-reaction of grace that began with God's promise of forgiveness for all people.

And who doesn't need some form of healing? Blind eyes can be opened to see many things.

Not only the physical world, but the Spiritual world. The world of God and grace and freedom.

The world of actions following words. Every one of us can be an avenue of healing. With Kindness, as we daily meet people in need of mental, emotional and soul healing. We can encourage and develop a place of welcome and acceptance So that all people can receive the grace and mercy of our God as we experience. This is how people heal and grow and live transformed lives. Proclaim the year of the Lord's favor...yes, now, more than ever. Isolated folks need to hear that they're loved and worthy of love. Things won't fill any voids. So many people live without any understanding that they're loved. But it's not true. God loves them. They too have a place here, at Jesus' table. They, too, have a welcomed invitation to eat and drink with our God. For this Feast today celebrates the completeness of Jesus' words and work. He has fulfilled all of Scripture. The plain truth hanging life-less on the cross where hatred for Jesus' Word and Action Met their end. And in their ending, In Jesus' bloody finishing, Is completeness for you, me and our world.

Complete and fulfilled love,

And freedom

And sight

And release.

Free in the Spirit to live as Christ. Where word and action matter.

Jesus' Word is fulfilled in the active choices we make and the way we serve and love our neighbour. It gives us Spirit-driven power to be the church Jesus calls us to be – to be the people Jesus calls us to be.

In the way we speak And in what we show.

This is life changing.

This is Christ

Fulfilling His Word and Work in Your hearing.

Amen.

